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ABSTRACT

A survey of the employers of the 1980 career graduates of Dundalk Community College (DCC) was conducted to evaluate the college's instructional programs and to assess the extent to which DCC assisted graduates in their preparation for career employment. Questionnaires were sent to 73 employers of career and non-career graduates in early 1981. Study findings, based on the responses of the 26 firms employing career graduates, indicated: (1) 69% of the employed career graduates were female and 62% held an associate degree; (2) 56% of the employers required or preferred an associate degree for the jobs the graduates were holding; (3) all employers were satisfied with the graduates' performance, job skills, familiarity with testing and laboratory equipment, and communication ability; (4) 96% of the respondents reported that DCC graduates were able to work well with others, 88% felt that graduates had good technical knowledge, and 96% reported that the work attitude of the graduates was good; (5) 54% of the employers felt that DCC graduates were better prepared than others in the work group; and (6) 96% said they would employ other DCC graduates in the future. Throughout the study report, statewide data are compared with DCC's findings. The survey instrument is appended. (HB)

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FOLLOW-UP STUDY: EMPLOYER FOLLOW-UP OF 1980 CAREER GRADUATES

DUNDALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

March, 1982

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FOLLOW-UP STUDY: EMPLOYER FOLLOW-UP OF 1980 CAREER GRADUATES

DUNDALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUMMARY

Dundalk Community College in cooperation with the Maryland State Board for Community Colleges conducted a study of employers of 1980 graduates. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the College's instructional programs. Also, it was designed to evaluate the extent to which the College assisted the graduates in their preparation for career employment. This study reports the results of that study. Questionnaires were mailed to 73 employers of both the career and non-career graduates in early 1981. The adjusted response rate was 61 percent. For the purpose of this report, only responses from employers (26) of career graduates were analysed.

The major College survey findings are listed below:

- 69 percent of employed career graduates were female.
- 62 percent were holding associate degrees.
- All but one of the employers were white.
- Two-thirds of all employers either require or prefer an associate degree for employment.
- All employers were quite satisfied with the graduates' performance or job skills.
- All employers reported that the DCC graduates had complete familiarity with the test and/or laboratory equipment where appropriate.
- No inadequacy of communication ability of the graduates with their supervisors was reported by the employers.

- All but one of the employers said that the graduates were able to work well with others.
- 88 percent of the employers felt that the graduates had good technical knowledge.
- 96 percent of the employers reported the work attitude of the graduates as good to very good.
- 100 percent of the employers felt complete satisfaction with the quality of work of the graduates.
- 92 percent of those surveyed gave an overall rating of vocational training as good to very good.
- More than half of the employers said that DCC graduates were better prepared than others in the work group. Nearly 11 percent said that their preparation was about the same as other employers. The others felt that there was no basis for comparison.
- 96 percent of employers said that they would employ other DCC graduates in the future.

PREFACE

This report presents the results of a 1981 survey of employers of 1980 career graduates. The study was conducted in an effort to evaluate the College's instructional programs. The project was a joint venture between Dundalk Community College and the State Board for Community Colleges. The report includes comparisons with the Statewide study which consists of responses from all employers of Maryland Community Colleges' graduates including Dundalk Community College.

The assistance provided by the staff of the State Board for Community Colleges, especially Daniel McConochie in the analyses of the College and Statewide data, is greatfully acknowledged.

K. Rajasekhara
Director
Institutional Research
and Grants

March, 1982

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FOLLOW-UP STUDY: EMPLOYER FOLLOW-UP OF 1980 CAREER GRADUATES

DUNDALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PURPOSE

In early 1981 a survey of employers of 1980 Career graduates was conducted. The purpose of this survey was to evaluate the College's institutional programs. The study was also conducted to provide data for the Program Data Monitoring System and the Vocational Education Data System.

METHOD

Study Population

The study population consisted of all employers of 1980 graduates who gave permission to contact their supervisors. The population of 73 employers included employers of both career and non-career graduates who were employed full-time and part-time.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were developed by the Maryland Community College Research Group and included information on the adequacy of preparation, technical knowledge and overall job performance of the graduates. The Employer Questionnaire is shown in Appendix A.

The following information was taken directly from the College records for analysis: degree or certificate earned, sex, and race.

Procedure

The College received the questionnaires from State Board for Community Colleges (SBCC) for mailing. A master list of employers and graduates of career and non-career programs was created. The list was used to keep track of the envelopes returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service. The first packets were mailed in March 1981 and consisted of a cover letter from the President, the questionnaire, and a preaddressed, post-paid return envelope. A second mailing was made to non-respondents two weeks later.

The completed questionnaires were separated into career and non-career groups and forwarded to SBCC. The demographic information on the graduates was also provided.

Among the 73 employers in the study population, 43 returned usable questionnaires for an unadjusted return rate of 59 percent. However, two questionnaires were returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service, producing a response rate of 61 percent among those actually receiving the questionnaires. Among the 43 completed questionnaires 26 were from employers of career graduates and 17 from the employers of non-career graduates. At SBCC, only data from the employers of career graduates were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), (Nie, et.al., 1976). The findings in this report, therefore, are based on the 26 returns from the employers of the career graduates. The Statewide figures are given for comparison purposes.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Employees (career graduates)

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the career graduates who were employed during 1980-81. Nearly two-thirds of the employed DCC graduates were associate degree holders. Eighty-seven percent of the employed Statewide graduates were associate degree holders. Women graduates outnumber men in their employment by two to one. The results for Statewide graduates were similar.

TABLE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EMPLOYEES (CAREER GRADUATES)

Characteristics	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Highest Degree Earned				
Associate	16	62	542	87
Certificate	10	38	78	13
Sex				
Male	8	31	238	38
Female	18	69	383	62
Race				
American Indian	0	-	4	1
Asian	0	-	9	2
Black	0	-	74	12
Hispanic	1	4	5	1
White	25	96	510	83
Other	0	-	12	2
TOTAL	26	100	621	100

More than nine-tenths of all employed DCC graduates were white. The Statewide figure for whites was 83 percent. There were no responses from employers of black DCC graduates. Twelve percent of the employees in the Statewide survey were blacks.

Associate Degree Requirement

Nearly two-thirds of all employers who responded said that they either require or prefer an associate degree for the jobs the graduates were holding (Table 2). The number of employers, however, requiring the degree was far lower than those preferred. Three-fourths of Statewide employers either require or prefer a degree.

TABLE 2

DEGREE REQUIREMENT

Associate Degree Requirement	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Required	2	8	171	29
Preference Given	14	56	264	45
No Preference	9	36	148	26
TOTAL	25	100	583	100

Job Skills Performance

When the employers were asked to rate the performance of job skills of the DCC graduates, all reported either adequate or more than adequate (Table 3). In the Statewide survey, about five percent reported as inadequate.

TABLE 3

PERFORMANCE OF JOB SKILLS

Skills	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
More than adequate	12	46	241	41
Adequate	14	54	311	54
Inadequate	0	-	28	5
TOTAL	26	100	580	100

Equipment Familiarity

The employers reported that the DCC graduates had complete familiarity with the test and/or laboratory equipment required by the job (Table 4). Forty-four percent of the employers reported that the job did not need a familiarity with equipment. In the Statewide survey, 9 percent of the m-ployers said that the familiarity of the graduates with the equipment was inadequate.

TABLE 4

EQUIPMENT FAMILIARITY

Familiarity	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
More than adequate	5	38	143	33
Adequate	8	62	254	58
Inadequate	0	-	40	9
TOTAL	13	100	437	100

Ability to Learn New Techniques

When asked to rate the graduates' ability to learn new techniques on the job, almost all employers reported that the graduates were able to learn quite adequately (Table 5). Similar responses were received from the employers of Statewide graduates.

TABLE 5

ABILITY TO LEARN NEW TECHNIQUES

Learning New Techniques	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
More than adequate	14	56	344	58
Adequate	11	44	243	41
Inadequate	0	-	7	1
TOTAL	25	100	594	100

Communication Ability

No inadequacy of communication ability of DCC graduates with their supervisors was reported by the employers (Table 6). The Statewide survey showed four percent inadequacy in the ability to communicate with supervisors.

TABLE 6

COMMUNICATION ABILITY

Communication Ability	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
More than adequate	14	61	297	50
Adequate	9	39	268	46
Inadequate	0	-	25	4
TOTAL	23	100	590	100

Ability to Work Well with Others

Ninety-six percent of respondents reported that DCC graduates were able to work quite adequately with others (Table 7). Similar responses were reported by employers of Statewide graduates.

TABLE 7

ABILITY TO WORK WELL WITH OTHERS

Ability to Work Well with Others	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
More than adequate	17	68	343	57
Adequate	7	28	238	40
Inadequate	1	4	15	3
TOTAL	25	100	596	100

Vocation Training

The employers were asked to rate the vocational training received by the graduates in the areas of Technical knowledge, work attitude, and work quality. They were also asked to give an overall rating of the training as it related to the requirements of the job.

Technical Knowledge

Eighty-eight percent of the employers reported that DCC graduates had good technical knowledge (Table 8). Twelve percent had no opinion to express. Similar results were reported in the Statewide survey.

TABLE 8

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

Technical Knowledge	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very good	12	48	241	41
Good	10	40	262	45
Neutral	3	12	12	12
Poor	0	-	9	2
TOTAL	25	100	583	100

Work Attitude

Ninety-six percent of the employers reported the work attitude of the graduates as good to very good (Table 9). Only one employer indicated the work attitude of the graduate as poor. Nine-tenths of the employers of the Statewide graduates reported their employee attitude as good to very good. Two percent reported as poor and seven percent remained neutral.

TABLE 9

WORK ATTITUDE

Work Attitude	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very good	16	67	357	61
Good	7	29	179	30
Neutral	0	-	39	7
Poor	1	4	11	2
TOTAL	24	100	586	100

Work Quality

When the employers were asked to rate the quality of work of DCC graduates, all reported as good to very good (Table 10). In the Statewide survey six percent of the employers remained neutral in their opinion and one percent rated the work quality of the graduates as poor.

TABLE 10

WORK QUALITY

Work Quality	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very good	13	52	317	54
Good	12	48	227	39
Neutral	0	-	36	6
Poor	0	-	5	1
TOTAL	25	100	585	100

Overall Rating of Training

Over nine-tenths of the employers of DCC graduates gave an overall rating of vocational training as good to very good (Table 11). Eight percent of the employers did not have any opinion on this. Eighty-eight percent of the employers of the Statewide graduates rated the overall training as good to very good. Nearly 11 percent did not have any opinion and two percent reported the training of their employees as poor to very poor.

TABLE 11

OVERALL RATING OF TRAINING

Overall Rating	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very good	10	40	238	41
Good	13	52	275	47
Neutral	2	8	61	10.5
Poor	0	-	7	1.2
Very Poor	0	-	2	0.3
TOTAL	25	100	583	100

Preparation of Graduates in Relation to other Employees

The employers were asked to rate the preparation of DCC graduates in relation to other employees in their work group who did not receive such training. More than half of the respondents said that the graduates were better prepared (Table 12). Nearly 11 percent said that their preparation was about the same as other employees. Nearly 35 percent reported there was no basis for comparison. Forty-seven percent of the employers of the State-wide graduates reported that their employees were better prepared. Only three percent said that they were not prepared well and 31 percent reported no basis for comparison.

TABLE 12

RELATIVE PREPARATION

Relative Preparation	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Better prepared	14	54	289	47
Both same	3	11	119	19
Less prepared	0	-	20	3
No comparison	9	35	193	31
TOTAL	26	100	621	100

Employment of Future Graduates

When the employers were asked if they would employ another graduate from Dundalk Community College with similar training, 96 percent of them reported in the affirmative (Table 13). Similar results were obtained when compared to Statewide employers of the graduates.

TABLE 13

EMPLOYMENT OF FUTURE GRADUATES

Future Employment for Graduates	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	25	96	574	97
No	1	4	16	3
TOTAL	26	100	590	100

Cooperation for Further Evaluation

The employers were asked if they would be willing to share their expertise and be contacted for further evaluation of College programs. An overwhelming majority (96%) of the employers expressed interest in the further evaluation of College programs. The Statewide figure for this category was 91 percent.

TABLE 14

COOPERATION FOR FURTHER EVALUATION

Cooperation	DCC Graduates		Statewide Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	21	96	507	91
No	1	4	50	9
TOTAL	22	100	557	100

REFERENCES

Nie, N.H., Hull, C.H., Jenkins, J.A., Steinbrenner, K., Bent, D.H. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. New York, McGraw Hill,1976

Tschechtelin, J.D., MacLean, A.D., Student Follow-Up of Entrants and Graduates, Maryland Community Colleges. Annapolis, Md: State Board for Community Colleges, 1980

MARYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES
EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help your community college and the State Board for Community Colleges assess and improve their programs. Please return it in the envelope provided. Thank you for your assistance.

Name of Graduate

Graduate's Job Title

A. For the job held by the community college graduate you supervise, is a two-year associate degree required? (check one)

14
- ☐ 1. Yes, at least an associate degree is required
- ☐ 2. No, but preference is given to holders of an associate degree
- ☐ 3. No, and no preference is given

B. Based on your own experience of supervising a community college graduate, please indicate how adequately you feel the college prepared him/her in each of the areas listed below. (check appropriate response)

	More Than Adequate 1	Adequate 2	Inadequate 3	Not Observed or Not Applicable 4
15 Performance of job skills from beginning of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐
16 Familiarity with any test or laboratory equipment required by this job from the beginning of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐
17 Ability to learn new techniques on the job	☐	☐	☐	☐
18 Ability to communicate with superiors	☐	☐	☐	☐
19 Ability to work well with other workers	☐	☐	☐	☐

(over)

ITEMS BELOW FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY 24

1 2 3 4	5 6 7 8 9 10	11	12	13
College Code	Program Number	C A	B I A H W F	M F

C. Please rate the vocational training received by the individual in the following areas: (check appropriate response)

		Very Good 5	Good 4	Neutral 3	Poor 2	Very Poor 1
20	Technical knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	Work attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	Work quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	What is your overall rating of the vocational training received by this individual as it relates to the requirements of his/her job?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

D. As a result of this person's vocational training, how would you rate his/her preparation in relation to other employees in his/her work group who did not receive such training? (check one)

24
- ☐ 0. No basis for comparison
- ☐ 1. Individual is better prepared
- ☐ 2. Both are about the same
- ☐ 3. Individual is less prepared

E. In general, would you employ another graduate from this community college who has a degree or certificate in the same area as your current employee?

25
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No Why? _____

F. Please specify any additional skills or areas of knowledge that you feel an Associate in Arts or Certificate graduate you employ should have.

_____

_____

_____

G. Please feel free to add any additional comments.

_____

_____

_____

H. If further evaluation of college programs is needed, would you be willing to share your expertise and be contacted by our faculty?

26 ☐ Yes ☐ No

Supervisor completing this questionnaire:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Company/Organization: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

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